

USBORNE FIRST READING



# King Donkey Ears



Retold by Lesley Sims  
Illustrated by Mike and Carl Gordon

# King Donkey Ears

Retold by Lesley Sims



Illustrated by  
Mike and Carl Gordon

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This story is  
about a king,




Meg,  
a servant,



the king's  
best friend,

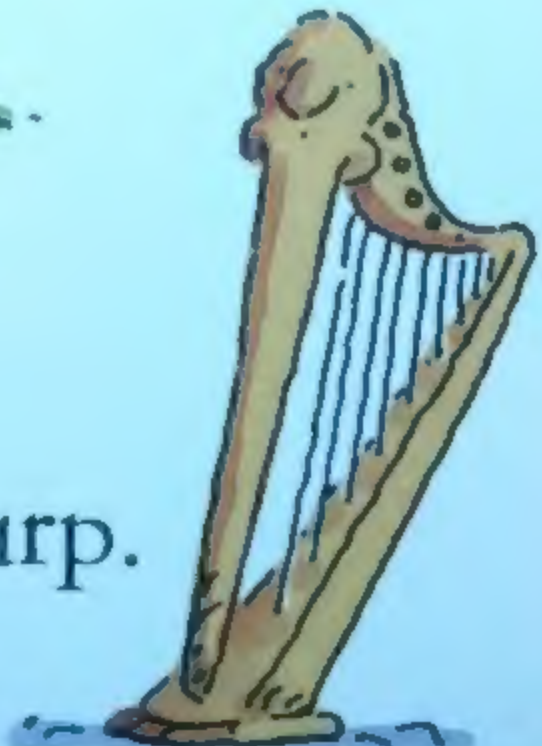




a tree,



a woodcutter



and a harp.



There was once a king  
with a big secret.



He didn't even tell his  
best friend.



No one knew...  
except the servant  
who cut his hair.



Every month, the king  
had a hair cut.

Snip!



Then he sent the  
servant to prison.

Shh!





In July, it was Meg's  
turn.



Meg saw the king's ears.



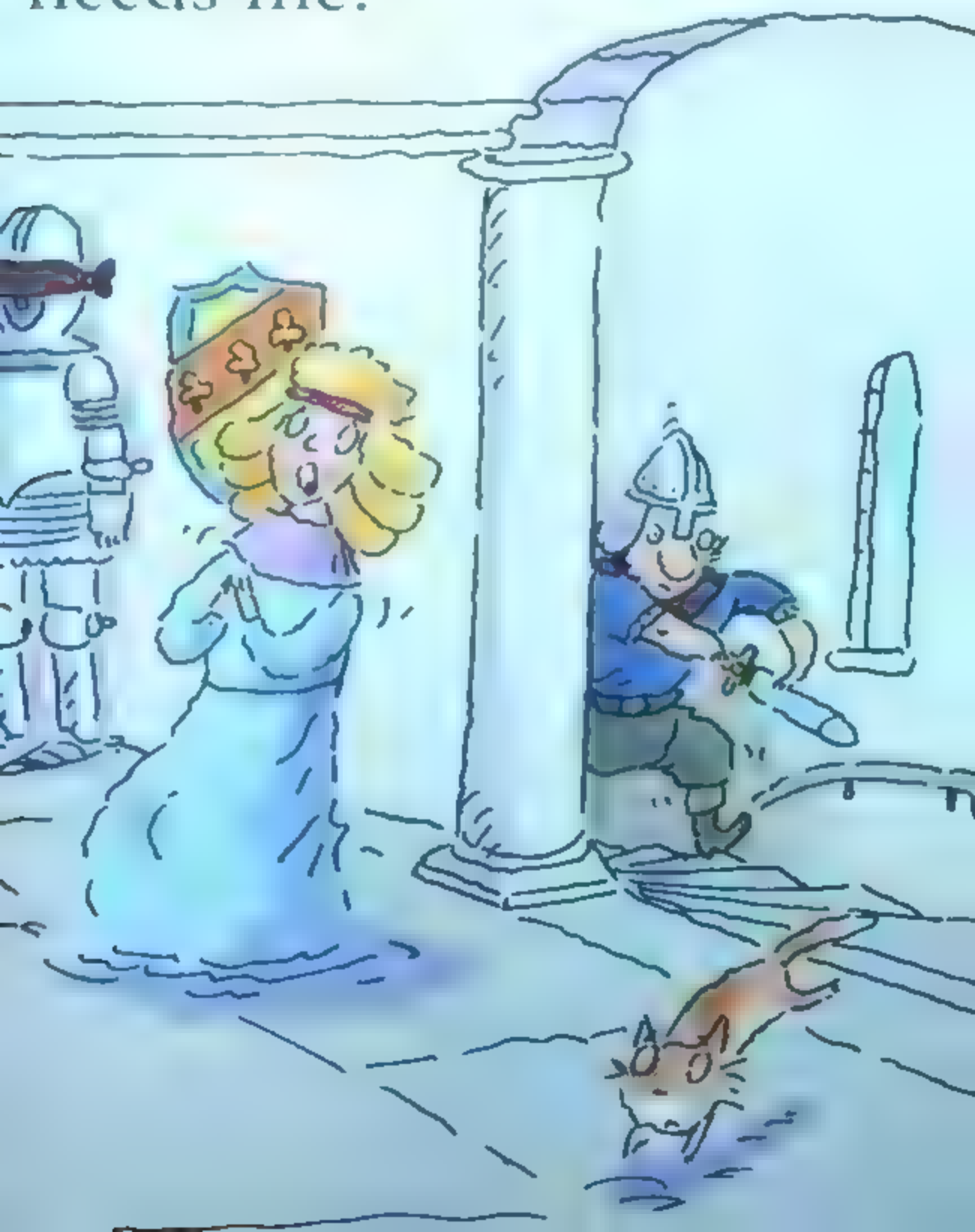
She was shocked, but  
she didn't say.



As soon as Meg had finished, the king cried,



“But my mother is sick,” said Meg. “She needs me.”





The king thought of his  
own mother.



He didn't like putting  
people in jail.

“Okay,” said the king.  
“Promise you’ll never  
tell anyone.”





That night, it was all  
Meg could think about.



She had to tell.



At last, she had an idea.  
She wouldn't tell anyone.

She'd tell a tree!

The king's got  
donkey ears!



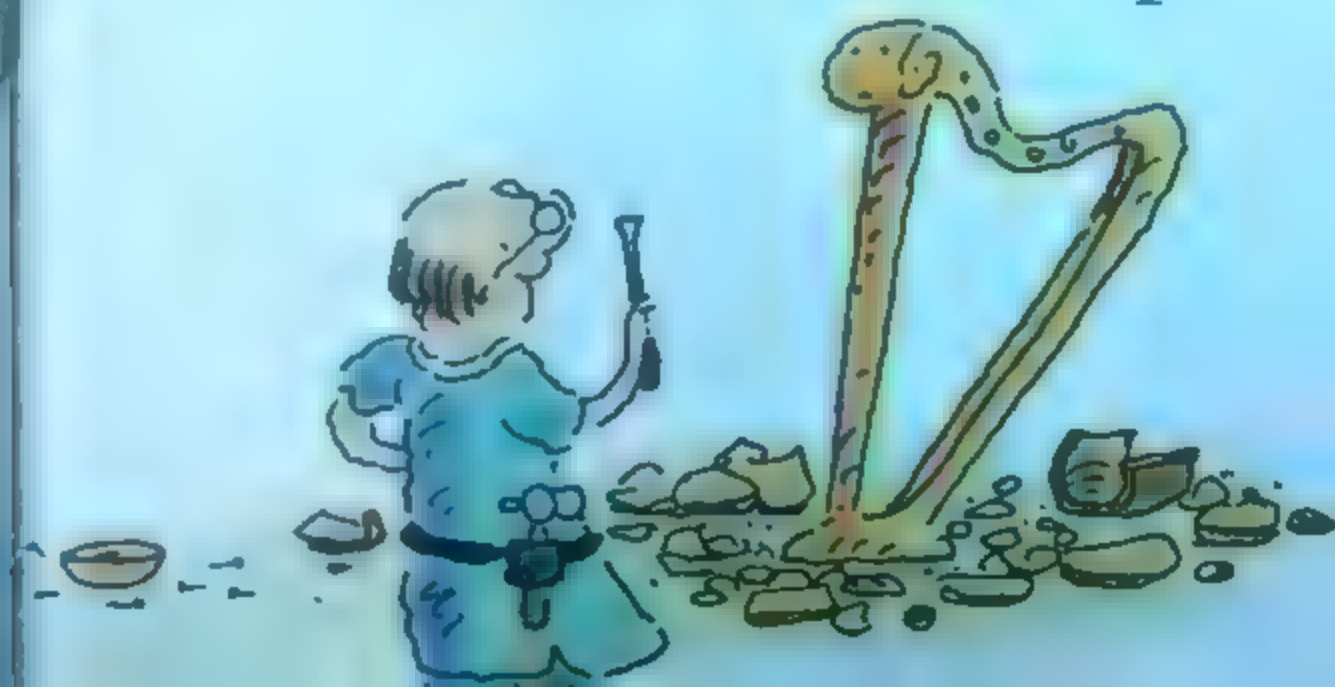
So she did. Now Meg  
felt much better.



Later, a woodcutter  
chopped down the tree.

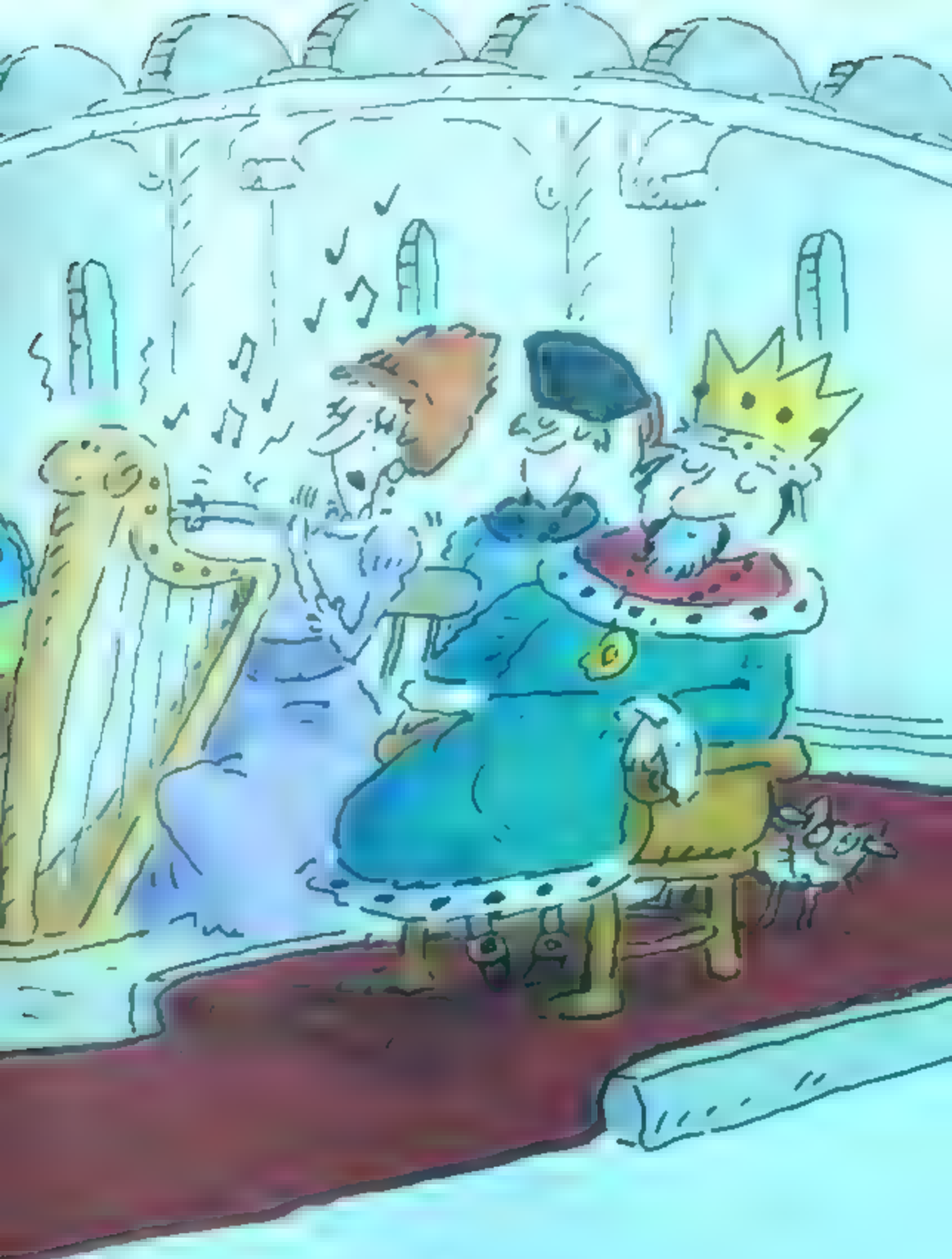


The tree became a harp.



One day, the king gave  
a huge concert.





But the new harp played  
a very strange tune.



The king's got donkey ears...

The king's got donkey ears...





“You told my secret!”  
the king roared at Meg.

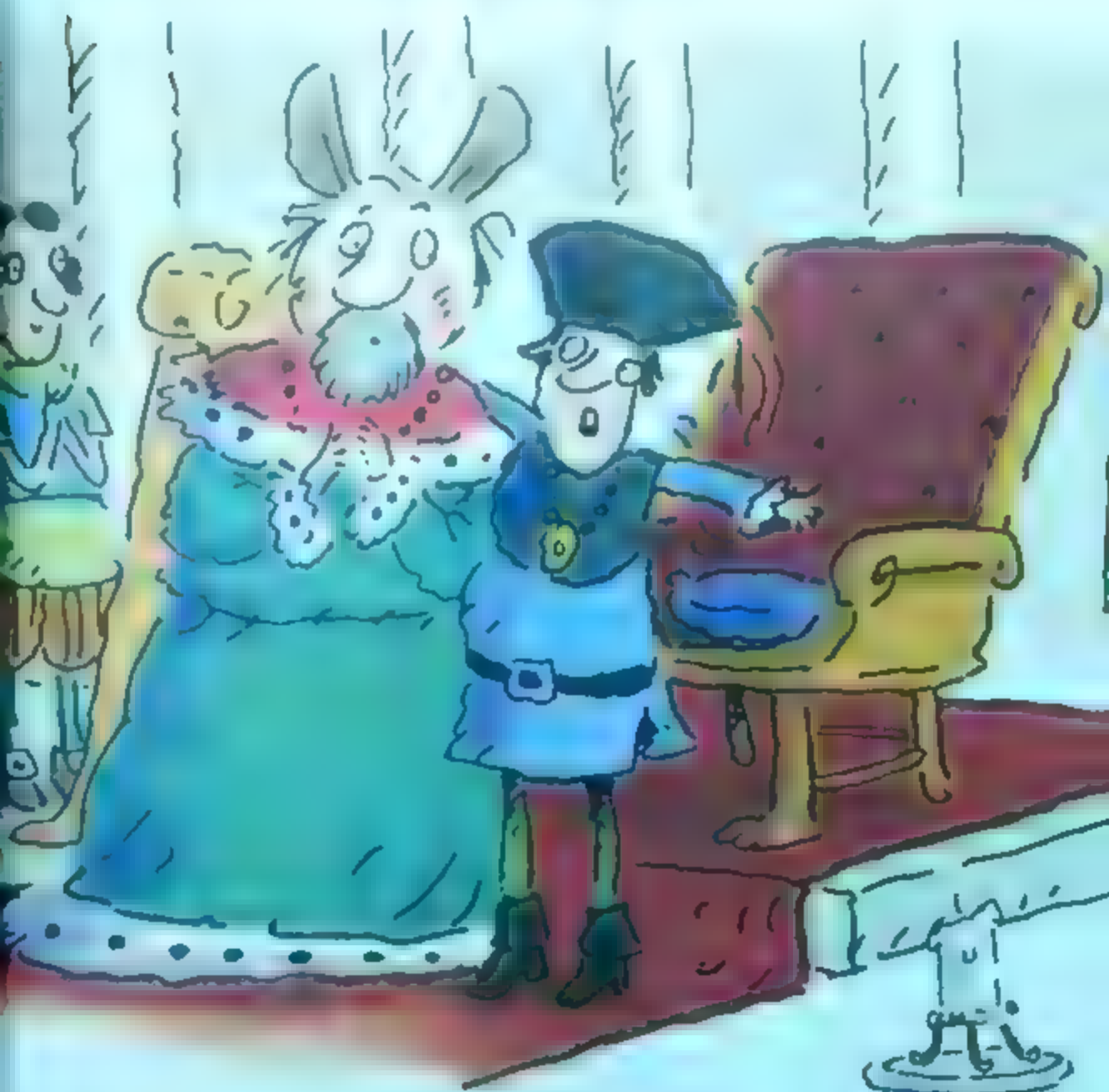
The king's best friend  
came forward.



“It’s not a secret,” he  
said. “We all know.”



“And you don’t mind?”  
asked the king.



“Of course not!”



So the king freed all  
the servants.





And he learned to love  
his ears.



# PUZZLES

## Puzzle 1

Put the pictures in order.

A



B



C



D



E



## Puzzle 2

Can you spot the differences  
between these two pictures?  
There are six to find.



# Puzzle 3

Find these things in the picture:





cat

chair

crown

flower

king

Meg



# Answers to puzzles

Puzzle 1

C



D



B



E



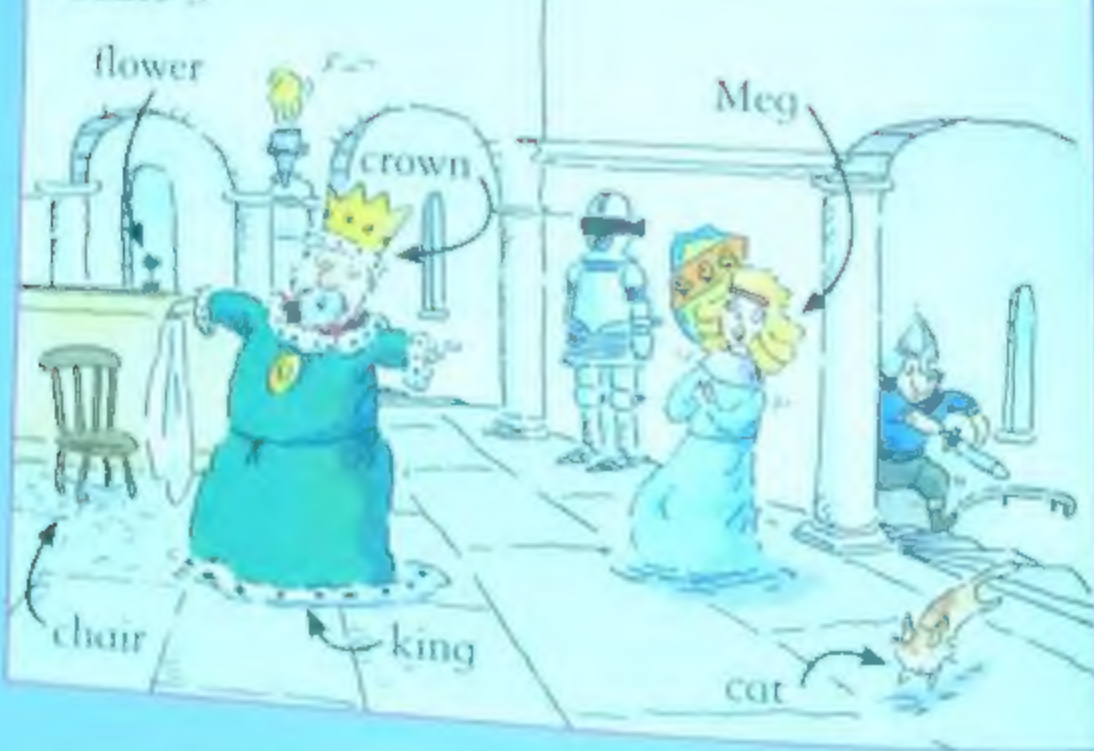
A



Puzzle 2



Puzzle 3



# About King Donkey Ears

*King Donkey Ears* is based on an Irish folk tale, but that came from a much older legend about a king named Midas.

King Midas was asked to judge a competition between a musician and the god Apollo. King Midas declared the musician the winner – and even said he was the better player.

Apollo was so angry, he gave King Midas donkey ears.






Designed by Caroline Spatz  
Series designer: Russell Punter



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# King Donkey Ears

Shhh! The king has a secret. I'll whisper it to you.

*"He has donkey's ears."*

This is a funny traditional tale with  
puzzles after the story.



**King Donkey Ears** is in the **Usborne First Reading** series, written especially for children who are learning to read, and developed in consultation with Alison Kelly, Principal Lecturer in Education and reading specialist at Roehampton University. With delightful illustrations, these books combine great stories with simple text to excite and inspire any beginner reader.

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